

## **REPORT OF THE BOARD OF ASSESSORS**

The Board of Assessor's meetings are held the second and fourth Wednesday at 9:30 a.m. in its office at 110 Main Street. These meetings are open to the public, but appointments to be included on their agenda are strongly recommended. Chairman Russell A. Bressette Jr., Assessors David Royce and Craig Beniot are members of the Board of Assessors.

Craig Beniot was appointed to fill the remaining term of board member Ann Murphy who stepped down to fill the administrative position in this office. Craig fulfilled the basic training course, "Department of Revenue Course 101" along with the Classification Training Workshop shortly after his appointment. Ann Murphy assisted the office in a smooth transition with her knowledge and expertise, after Audra Harris, Administrative Clerk left to start a new adventure in Montana.

Several key components took place over the past 12 months. The first major component was a software conversion. The Town of Monson has joined over 115 municipalities in Massachusetts in utilizing the Vision Appraisal software. Whenever a municipality converts the assessing software in a revaluation year the Department of Revenue requires a full exterior review of all properties to ensure the information converted accurately. The full exterior review of all properties was a time-consuming but extremely beneficial program. Driving around town, many improvements that were not listed were discovered and on the flip side removed improvements that were not actually there. This component took over three months but the database is much more accurate today. The third major component was the triennial revaluation itself. The revaluation was based on sales of residential homes that took place between January 1, 2006 and December 31, 2006. The FY 2008 values are based on what a willing buyer and a willing seller, under no duress, negotiate to be a fair market value. Commercial/Industrial properties are based on the income & cost approach to value.

Funding was approved to update and digitalize the assessors' maps to a GIS format. This is the first of many steps to eventually implement GIS in the Town Of Monson. For the past thirty years the maps have been manually updated and parcels have been combined in a computerized database but not noted on the maps. Currently, the assessing department in cooperation with the Monson High School Work-Based Learning Program has a high school senior assisting in the review and research process of this mapping review. Patrick Mahar will be helping review the draft maps through the spring of 2008. This is a win-win situation as Patrick is gaining a wonderful learning experience as well as this office benefiting with his willingness to learn and investigate issues that arise in the mapping review.

May's annual town meeting brought about some changes in the local acceptance of some legislation. The townspeople supported to exempt any personal property accounts under \$5,000 in value and also supported an increase in the income and assets requirements along with an increase in the exemption amount for Clause 41C- the Elderly exemption.

The board also wishes to thank all town departments along with the county and state officials that support our daily operations.

Respectfully submitted,

Russell A. Bressette Jr., Chairman  
David Royce, Assessor  
Craig Beniot, Assessor